

P R E S S R E L E A S E**The second in a series of five thematic exhibitions by a young painter.**

Author, Exhibition Title:	Richard Marco: Styx – Στυξ
Venue:	Záhorie Gallery of Ján Mudroch in Senica, Sadová 619/3
Curator:	Peter Megyeši
Exhibition Opening:	Friday, March 21, 2025, at 5:00 PM
Musical guests at the vernissage:	Colorful Music – Lucia Lužinská (vocals), Valér Miko (piano)
Exhibition Duration:	Friday, March 21, 2025 – Sunday, May 11, 2025

The Styx – Στυξ exhibition presents a selection of Richard Marco's paintings from the past three years, continuing his conceptually driven artistic program. In ancient Greek mythology and topography, the sacred river Styx forms the boundary between the world of the living and the dead. Its waters granted invulnerability to those who bathed in them, yet they were also poisonous. These borderline states and ambivalences evoked by the river Styx are typical of Marco's work. He explores the tension between the profane and the sacred, the contemporary and the historical, the archetypal and the individual. With his technically and technologically masterful "realist" painting, he comments on the transience of artifacts while also reflecting on the enduring relevance of themes and the immortality of artistic creation. Marco's painterly variations, resurrections, and reinterpretations embody an effort to resist decay and dissolution in their many forms.

Styx – Στυξ follows his 2022 exhibition λήθη – Léthé at the Nitra Gallery, the first in a planned series of five thematic presentations focused on themes of transition, transience, and forgetting. The exhibition titles and concepts are inspired by the unique characteristics of the five mythical rivers that separate the living from the dead in Greek mythology: the all-freezing Styx, the river of wailing Acheron, the river of lamentation Cocytus, the fiery Phlegethon, and the dark Lethe, whose waters erase memories of the earthly world.

Marco examines the potential of painting in shaping both individual and collective memory and in visually capturing impermanence, mortality, and their endurance across different eras. Through his paintings, he reveals, highlights, and comments on the conventions and contexts of sacred and mythological motifs and symbols, exploring their transmission, experience, and reinterpretation. By combining a fixed repertoire of symbols, motifs, and compositional solutions, he challenges the identity of images and disrupts expectations of a singular visual narrative. This approach is further emphasized in the current exhibition by the inclusion of works of Baroque figurative sacred sculpture—fragments from an original altar ensemble now housed in the Záhorie Gallery of Ján Mudroch. Richard Marco's

informed painterly dialogue with art history draws attention to the ambivalences of seemingly familiar genres, themes, and symbolic expressions in their evolving visual representations.

His work is defined by the tension between conventional motifs and their reinterpretation, shifts, and commentary, as well as by an emphasis on emotional states and the blending of different temporal layers within the image. His approach to updating archaic themes and navigating between sacred and profane iconography serves as a means of engaging with profound artistic and historical questions: mortality, transience, and the concept of eternity.

Peter Megyeši

Richard Marco (*1994, Prešov) belongs to the youngest generation of artists in Slovakia. However, his painting technique—drawing inspiration from historical painting and combining it with the visual language of photography—has already established him as a distinctive figure in contemporary painting. His work is characterized by an engagement with fundamental human questions, the interweaving of past and present, and an emphasis on emotional depth. While studying at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava (2015–2021, Department of Painting, under Professors Daniel Fischer and Ivan Csudai), Marco made a strong entrance into the art scene with his solo exhibition *Silentium* (2020) at the Bratislava City Gallery. Following his graduation, he continued presenting his work with the solo exhibition *Léthé* (2022) at the Nitra Gallery. He has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Slovakia and Germany, and his works are held in private collections both domestically and abroad.